

TRIBUTE TO THE NAVY DEPOT IN
JACKSONVILLE

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 22, 1995

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to join here with the mayor of Jacksonville and other distinguished guests to proclaim the accomplishments of our navy depot in Jacksonville. When it comes to value, NADEP is tops. Yesterday, the State of Florida selected the depot as a finalist for the 1995 Florida Sterling Quality Award. NADEP has a record of quality products, good labor/management relations, excellence in work, and cost containment. I am proud that NADEP has turned a profit of over \$100 million the past 4 years.

BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION ACT

HON. HENRY BONILLA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 22, 1995

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my good friend from Texas [Mr. ORTIZ] as an original cosponsor of the Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1995. Similar legislation was introduced by my colleague from Texas last year.

This legislation sets up a national tracking system which is based on a tried and true model in the area of cancer, where the Centers for Disease Control has worked in partnership with States, funding programs to monitor the incidence and research the environmental cases.

The surveillance program would identify and address the causes of birth defects, including risks from environmental chemicals, diet, occupational hazards, personal habits and infections; evaluate and put in place the most effective prevention strategies for such birth defects as spina bifida and fetal alcohol syndrome, and design targeted intervention strategies responsive to community concerns for special problems in minority, rural, and other underserved populations.

Mr. Speaker, more children die from birth defects in the first year of life in the United States than from any other cause, including prematurity and low birth weight. Birth defects are also a leading cause of childhood disability.

A significant proportion of common birth defects are preventable. This bill would provide important information to future parents and grandparents to educate them on how to implement prevention strategies that are responsive to community concerns.

Preventive education has already been a positive factor in Texas. For example, studies

folic acid is a major means of preventing birth defects. Folic acid is needed before a woman becomes pregnant. A woman can find the nutrient in green leafy vegetables, beans, orange juice, and a variety of other foods.

Every couple wants to have a healthy baby; however, birth defects cut across all geographic areas, classes, and races. Until we can discover a cure for birth defects, it is essential that mothers and fathers-to-be plan ahead and give their child the prenatal care that every child deserves. It's a wise investment in our children.

This bill is the important first step in helping our next generation be healthy and active members in our communities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOCK GRANTS ACT
OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 13, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 728) to control crime by providing law enforcement block grants.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, last year I made a commitment to the people of my district to put more cops in our local communities, and add 100,000 more cops across this country. That is a commitment I intend to keep.

The bill before us does not ensure a single new officer will be added to our communities so I must oppose it. In fact, it ensures nothing. The bill permits the \$10 billion block grant to be used for anything that generally reduces crime or improves public safety.

Proponents of the bill argue this is just the sort of flexibility we need: no limits, no guidelines. But just how flexible is this bill? Could it be used to construct highways or roads? Absolutely. In fact, an amendment I supported that would have prevented the \$10 billion from being used for these very purposes was defeated.

Taxpayers deserve more accountability than this. They deserve to know how their money is used. And when they ask for a crime bill they deserve to see more police in their neighborhoods.

The current law meets these goals with responsible flexibility for local government, and accountability for the taxpayers. The funding can be used to hire cops, purchase police technology and equipment, and bring on civilian clerks to free up officers from desk duty. Under an amendment I wrote, it can also be used to fund multijurisdictional task forces that allow local communities to pool their resources to focus on specific crime problems that don't respect suburban municipal boundaries.

The law we passed last year with bipartisan support ensures the purpose of the people,

REINVENTING GOVERNMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL ORTON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 21, 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. ORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ORTON. Madam Speaker, tonight I will talk about efforts taken by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to revitalize and reinvent the FHA single family housing program.

Created in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration—also known as FHA—has played a critical role in making homeownership a reality for more than 21 million Americans. Last year alone, FHA insured over 1.3 million single family loans, including 450,000 for first-time homebuyers. FHA carries out its mission of expanding homeownership through private sector lenders who have direct contact with borrowers. And, it does so without costing the taxpayer a single dollar, since homeowner premiums fully fund a reserve against future losses and pay all related administrative costs.

Commendably, however, FHA has not been content to rest on its record of accomplishments. It has aggressively developed and implemented changes in line with the overall reinventing government program. Let me tell you what has been done, and what is yet to be done.

Several years ago, largely as a result of regional recessions in some parts of the country, some concern developed over the long-term health of the FHA single family mortgage fund. This problem was promptly resolved through a change in the premium structure—the source of revenues for the program. As a result, the FHA reserve account easily exceeds required capital ratios, and Price Waterhouse has attested to the financial health of the fund.

As part of the reinventing government program, FHA has moved recently to cut costs, streamline operations, and improve customer service through consolidation of loan processing offices. Last year, FHA announced the opening of a regional loan processing center in Denver, CO. This center will perform loan processing that had been carried out by 17 HUD field offices in the Rocky Mountain and Southwest portions of the country. This consolidation should save approximately \$4 million a year. It is also expected to reduce loan processing time—from an average of about 5 weeks down to an average of about 5 days.

Just recently, FHA also announced changes in underwriting guidelines, to keep pace with procedures in the private sector. These changes more fully recognize second job and overtime income—a reflection of the increased